

Remarks

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-17, 19-22, 26, and 28-29 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 16 being the independent claims. Claims 28 and 29 are sought to be added. Claims 1, 4, 5, 9, 16, 19, and 22 are sought to be amended. Claims 3 and 27 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute similar or broader claims, with respect to amended and cancelled claims, in the future. No new matter has been entered by these amendments.

Applicants have retracted the withdrawal of claims 13 and 21 pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.141(a). These claims were drawn to a non elected species. However, their respective generic, linking claims, claims 1 and 16, are now allowable. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner bring claims 13 and 21 back into the pending application.

The Examiner is thanked for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 3, 9-11, 18, and 26-27.

Based on the above amendments and following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a)

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 12, 14-17, 19, 20, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Published Patent Application No. 2002/0011573 to Van Dijsseldonk et al. (“Dijsseldonk”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Although Applicants disagree with the rejection, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 16 to include subject matter similar to the allowable subject matter found in now cancelled claims 3 and 27. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1 and 16. Also, at least based on their respective dependencies from claims 1 and 16, claims 2, 4-7, 12, 14-15, 17, 19, 20, 22, and 28-29 should be allowed.

As discussed above, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.141(a), Applicants also request that claims 13 and 21 be brought back into the application and found allowable as being dependent on respective allowed, generic, linking claims 1 and 16.

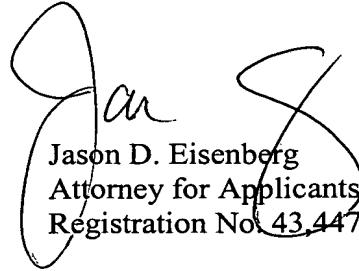
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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